



The STEWARD

North Carolina Division of Parks and Recreation
A Publication Sponsored by The Umstead Coalition

Michael F. Easley
 Governor

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William G. Ross Jr.
 Secretary, DENR

McKNELLY RETIRES AS DIRECTOR

Phil McNelly retired Feb. 1 as director of the NC Division of Parks and Recreation to take a position as executive director of the National Association of State Park Directors.

Lewis Ledford, superintendent of state parks, will serve the division as interim director, according to an announcement by Bill Ross, Secretary of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

McNelly said that his decision came with a mixture of pride in the division's accomplishments in recent years and the anticipation of challenges with the national association. He has served since 2001 as president of the association.

In a note to division employees, McNelly wrote, "My years with the division have made up the most rewarding period of my professional career. Because of the friends and contacts I have made, the events I have been involved in and – most importantly – the staff I have had

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WILLIAM E. BERRY AND WIFE DENISE ENJOY RETIREMENT CELEBRATION.

BERRY WILL BE MISSED FOR HIS QUIET INTEGRITY

Nobody in the state parks system ever mistook William Berry's quiet manner for a lack of attention or commitment.

Berry's reserve during his career with the Division of Parks and Recreation came to signify thoughtfulness and integrity as well as credibility since Berry never spoke unless he had something worthwhile to say, East District Superinten-

dent Susan Tillotson told Berry's friends and coworkers at a Feb. 7 celebration of his retirement as east district superintendent.

"He has always used judgment after very careful, thoughtful and analytical deliberation," she said. "It's always served him well."

Walt Gravley, another of his peers as west district superintendent, said people in the division will always miss Berry's legendary silence just as much as his spontaneous laugh.

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 FOR STATE PARKS
 INFO AND EVENTS**

Department of Environment and Natural Resources

UMSTEAD COALITION VALUES PARK 'SOUL'

"William B. Umstead State Park is special because it has a soul," says Agatha King Johnson, who grew up in what is now the park where she "played in the woods and the creeks" as a little girl.

The Umstead Coalition works to preserve and expand upon the "soul" of the park—the "soul" which is in the woodlands and the wildlife, the waters and the environment. The Umstead Coalition's mission is to preserve the natural integrity of William B.

Umstead State Park and the Richland Creek Natural Area. Information on the Umstead Coalition and park events can be found at <http://umsteadcoalition.org>.

Many visitors are awed by the majesty of the woodlands so close to the daily grind of RTP and North Carolina state government. It is the goal of the Umstead Coalition to inform the community of the importance of preserving such a treasure, and public awareness efforts are continuous

through a variety of efforts.

The annual Celebration for Umstead picnic is scheduled for Saturday, April 17. The celebration is a community effort that promotes the appreciation and use of the park. Themes for this year are protection of wildflowers through the control of invasive plants, environmental education and land acquisition.

The event features a four-mile walk/run through William B. Umstead State Park and will

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UP CLOSE AND 'PERSONNEL'

Jeffrey Turner was hired as Park Ranger I at Merchants Millpond State Park. He holds a bachelor's degree in fisheries and wildlife sciences from North Carolina State University and has worked as an environmental educator.

Karl Schliebe joined the staff at Raven Rock State Park as Park Ranger I. He has a bachelor's degree in park and recreation management from Western Carolina University. He has worked as a seasonal at Jordan Lake State Recreation Area.

Victor Freeman was hired as a Park Ranger I at South Mountains State Park. He has a bachelor's degree in recreation management/biology from UNC-Pembroke and has worked with Jordan Lake and Hanging Rock as a seasonal employee.

Karen Ake was hired as an Office Assistant III at Morrow Mountain State Park. She has an associate's degree in paralegal technology and criminal justice technology from Fayetteville Technical Community College and more than 15

years experience with Cumberland County and the Fayetteville Police Department.

Renee Baranczyk joined the staff at Mount Mitchell State Park as an Office Assistant III. She has worked at Mount Mitchell as a seasonal employee for more than a year.

Joseph Williams was hired as a General Utility Worker with Morrow Mountain State Park. He has a masters degree in biology/physics from Appalachian State University and more than two years experience at Morrow Mountain as a seasonal employee.

Rachel Gooding was hired as a Processing Assistant III with administration. She holds certificates in secretarial science and information processing from Saint Augustine's College. She has more than 13 years of secretarial experience.

Carrie Paige is the new Office Assistant IV with the planning and natural resources section. She attended Pitt Community College with a major in secretarial science and has more than eight years of secre-

tarial experience.

Sandra Rutledge joined Cliffs of the Neuse State Park as an Office Assistant III and has more than 31 years of secretarial/office management experience.

Jason Anthony was hired at Hanging Rock State Park as a Park Ranger I. He holds a bachelor's degree in english/history from Toccoa Falls College. He has more than two years experience working at Fort Macon and Hammocks Beach state parks.

Daniel Moore was hired at William B. Umstead State Park as a General Utility Worker. He has an associate's degree from Louisburg College and an A.B. in religion from Pfeiffer University. He has more than 14 years of related work experience.

Kenneth Futch joined the staff at Carolina Beach State Park as Park Ranger I. He earned a bachelor's degree in parks and recreation at UNC-Wilmington and has worked as a seasonal employee there and with the NC Wildlife Commission.

UMSTEAD COALITION

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include live music along the trail followed by a celebration with live music, food, environmental exhibits, and photo exhibits.

Theo Davis Sons, Inc., a 72-year-old commercial printing company in Zebulon, has donated, through the Umstead Coalition, the printing of a full-color *Spring Wildflower* brochure. The photos were taken by volunteer David Feltus; text was written by Frank McKay; and the layout/design was done by Jennifer Wells. The photos featured in the brochure were taken in the park, and the brochure includes descriptions of the wildflowers. The brochure will be available at the park's visitor's center for a small fee.

Tom Weber was a park visitor and then a park volunteer, and his volunteerism exposed him to the beauty and the history of the park. His

growing passion for the park became the inspiration for a book, *Stories in Stone, Searching for the Soul of a Bygone, Rural North Carolina Community*.

The book offers lively stories and family histories about the life and times of growing up within the park boundaries, years before it became a park. The book is now at the publisher and will soon be ready for release. It will be available for purchase at the park office through the Umstead Coalition.

Ongoing renovation projects (preserving the WPA and CCC-built group camps) and multi-use trail expansion and renovations are important to keep the "soul" of the park alive as it speaks to new generations of park users. We believe Agatha King Johnson's folks would be proud to know that their legacy lives on through the efforts of those who care.

DIVISION COMMISSIONS 19 RANGERS

The Division of Parks and Recreation commissioned 19 new rangers as law enforcement officers Feb. 7 in the Archdale Building in Raleigh.

It was the largest such ceremony since 1988 and comes in the wake of an extended hiring freeze lifted in mid-2003.

Bill Ross, Secretary of the NC Department of Environment and Natural Resources, spoke briefly to the rangers before they took the commission oath administered by Teresa McCall, the division's personnel director.

Ross asked the rangers about their experiences at Basic Law Enforcement Training and noted that the division got high praise from among agencies helping at the First Flight ceremonies in December.

"I'm so impressed with the appreciation and respect that park rangers get from other state and federal agencies," Ross said. "There's a history that this division has gone out of its way to help things go smoothly across state government."

Lewis Ledford,



superintendent of state parks, told the rangers that a part of their job is to know the mission of the parks system and to learn about all aspects of the division's work.

Ledford noted the state has entrusted to them some of the nation's most valuable natural resources and among the division's most important resources for that job are the men and women entitled to wear the ranger's campaign hat.

"You should make sure you're always prepared to turn those natural resources over to others in better shape than when you received them," he said.

The rangers receiving

commissions and their respective parks are: Jeffrey Owen, Christopher Sicard, Cliffs of the Neuse; Aubrie Morris, Crowders Mountain; David Mumford, Andrew Chilton, Falls Lake; Sarah Bouknight, Andrew Fairbanks, Goose Creek; Katherine Kellon, Hammocks Beach; Thomas Garner, Jones Lake; Nowell Steider, Jordan Lake; Jeffrey Bachman, Alfred Bowen, Andrew Buchanan, Lumber River; William Jarman, Kerr Lake; Jason Gwinn, Medoc Mountain; Benjamin Veasey, Singletary Lake; Victor Freeman, South Mountains; Lucy Mantilla, Stone Mountain; Bill Duke, William B. Umstead.

WILLIAM BERRY

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"I've asked him to put that in a bottle so we can just squeeze it from time to time," Gravley said.

Berry retired Jan. 30 after more than 30 years as ranger, park superintendent and one of four district superintendents.

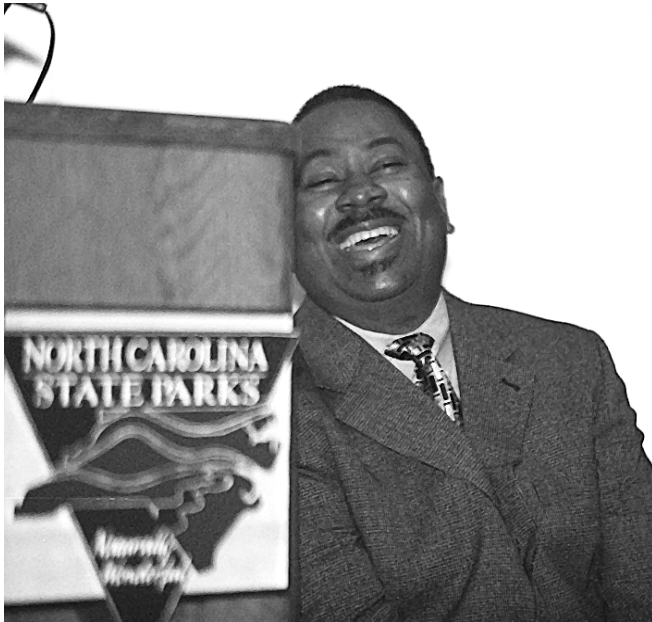
Berry told the group that he is grateful for the opportunity and is also grateful for his wife Denise and daughter Tiffany who supported him.

"The parks system has afforded me the opportunity to have a variety of experiences. That's why I've always been proud to wear the green and gray," he said.

Berry, 50, is a native of Swansboro and a 1975 graduate of Winston-Salem State University, earning a bachelor's degree in political science. While in college, he began working as a seasonal employee at Hammocks Beach State Park, just outside his hometown.

Berry earned a Ranger I position in 1975 in the Reedy Creek section of the then-segregated William B. Umstead State Park, working under former superintendent James Johnson. In 1983, he became the first superintendent at Jordan Lake State Recreation Area, and in 1989 transferred to Kerr Lake State Recreation Area as superintendent. He became east district superintendent in September 2000.

During the ceremonies, Superintendent of State Parks Lewis Ledford read a commendation from US Rep. Frank W. Ballance Jr. and Ledford added that Berry always received high praise from his superiors during his career.



INFECTIOUS LAUGH HAS BEEN A BERRY HALLMARK DURING HIS 30-PLUS YEARS WITH THE PARKS SYSTEM.



BERRY ACCEPTS DIVISION PLAQUE FROM WEST DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT WALT GRAVLEY.

"I think the success of this division has not been due to individual effort. It's been teamwork, and William, you've always been a team player. Your work has not been a vocation, but an avocation and we thank you for it," Ledford said.

Phil McKnelly, recently retired division director, said that Berry's many accomplishments include bringing Kerr Lake up to an acceptable standard in terms of visitor services "through quiet leadership and diplomacy."

Shederick Mole, a ranger at Kerr Lake, agreed and said, "Not only the staff at Kerr Lake, but all the community around the lake thought the world of William Berry, and that made our jobs much easier."

Mole said that Berry has been an invaluable role model to him "as a young black man in this division," offering him encouragement as well as advice. "William should be a role model to everybody," he said.

Paul Donnelly, the current superintendent at Hammocks Beach and another colleague of Berry's at Kerr Lake, said Berry gave him lessons in leadership as well, including that of "making sure everybody who visits your park has the opportunity to enjoy its unique and beautiful natural resources."

STARTING NEW YEAR ON RIGHT FOOT

By KARI MATHISEN
Publications Coordinator

Sunshine and clear skies ushered in the Eno River Association's annual New Year's Day hike at Eno River State Park, organized by executive director Lori Olsen and long-time member Marcia Eickmeier.

Several hundred park enthusiasts and association members ventured through the park to kick off the "Winter Hike Series" sponsored each year by the association. Starting from Few's Ford access, guided hikes brought park enthusiasts together for fellowship and to build awareness of the park, while hikers' dogs had a chance to romp.

Launching the new year with a focus on active preservation and appreciation of the park's land, the Eno River Association works to engage and educate the community on environmental issues where conservation of land and wildlife is concerned. New Year's Day for 2004 provided optimal weather to join fellow hikers in celebrating the achievements of the previous year, and to start the year on the right foot, or rather, hiking boot.

In its winter and spring hiking series, the association holds hikes every Sunday at 2 p.m. to build support and provide recreational activities to association members and anyone else - young and old - who wants to spend a day outdoors.

The winter hiking series lasts from New Year's Day through the end of February, when finally, with a lessening



ABOUT 400 PEOPLE, YOUNG AND OLD, APPEARED ALONG THE ENO RIVER'S TRAILS THIS YEAR FOR THE ANNUAL NEW YEAR'S DAY HIKE.

chance for snow and ice, March ushers in the spring hiking series for hikers to scope out wildflowers through May.

Citizens formed the Eno River Association in 1966 in an effort to drum up interest and resources in Durham County for preserving the river corridor. Back then, before the park and its trail systems were built, devoted hikers blazed trails by bushwhacking through the woods and across the river. The association now has nearly 12,000 members from around the world, most of them from Wake, Durham and Orange

counties. About 100 members comprise the out-of-state contingency.

On this New Year's Day, two organized and guided hikes were offered: one long hike of 4.6 miles on steep terrain and one short hike of 1.5 miles of easy terrain. While both hikes mainly covered existing trails, they veered off the shoulders of the park into fields of the new 805-acre "Eno wilderness" property recently acquired by the state parks system. This acquisition and others recently initiated by the association have resulted in a 33 percent increase in the park's size.

On such a sunny day, turnout was high with approximately 400 hikers. Even in cold, rainy weather of some previous years, turnout has only fallen to 140. This represents the overwhelming support of the community to appreciate and use the park as it was intended.

Afterwards, hikers gathered at a picnic shelter to warm up with hot chocolate, cider, popcorn and toasted marshmallows.



THE EVENT ENDS WITH HOT CIDER AND TOASTED MARSHMALLOWS.

AMEN CORNER

The following letters concerning good work within the Division of Parks and Recreation were received recently.

Dear Director Phil McKnelly:

On behalf of the North Carolina State Bureau of Investigation, I want to express appreciation to you and your personnel for their positive spirit of cooperation and dedicated professionalism during the First Flight Centennial celebration in Kill Devil Hills, NC. The NC State Parks personnel played a significant role in assisting with the safety of attendees and staff during this historic event. Also, the assistance provided by Superintendent George Barnes and his staff at Jockey's Ridge State Park, in the planning and preparation for the event, was invaluable.

Your personnel assigned to this detail were outstanding representatives of the NC Department of Environment and Natural Resources, and their assistance was a tremendous service to the citizens of North Carolina and the United States. All of your contributions greatly assisted in a successful celebration and you are to be commended for these efforts.

Sincerely,

Melanie W. Thomas
Assistant Director

Dear Mr. McKnelly:

I wanted to let you know about a very pleasant experience I had this weekend with one of your employees. My 16-year-old daughter and I spent this past Saturday hiking at Hanging Rock State Park. It was a cold and rainy day, but we had a wonderful time. As we were leaving, with the park almost empty, Ranger Matt Windsor stood with me in the rain to give me directions for the best route home. He brought me inside the main building that had already been closed in order to find a map and make a copy for me. He was thoughtful, friendly and extremely helpful. The public is very well served by dedicated state employees such as Ranger Windsor.

Sincerely,
Alan S. Hirsch
Policy Director, Office of the Governor

This was sent to Richard Smith, Maintenance Mechanic III at Singletary Lake State Park.

Dear Mr. Smith

I wanted to thank you on behalf of all of us from Duke. We had a wonderful Saturday at Lake Singletary. There are now eight more people in love with the park. We also sincerely appreciate your patience, generosity and the excellent conditions of the facilities. Again, thank you and I hope to visit Lake Singletary again soon and bring with me a much larger group.

Sincerely,
Sarah Gach and Duke University MSA

McKNELLY

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the opportunity to work with, and the family that has stuck by me in the good times and bad, my life has been richer than any one person has a right to expect.

"I realize that my leaving will initiate a period of change for the division, just as any change creates a bit of turmoil for those involved, and I regret that. But, to our division staff, I hope you will always remember that 'in chaos, lies opportunity,' and perhaps this unexpected turn of events will create some unanticipated opportunities for the division and for some of our folks."

McKnelly joined the division in 1985 as superintendent of state parks and served from 1986-89 as deputy director before being named director. He is a native of Arkansas, a graduate of the University of

Arkansas and earned a doctorate from Texas A&M University. He is a former professor at North Carolina State University.

McKnelly's many accomplishments include shepherding the 1993 parks bond referendum through the legislative process — that culminated with \$35 million for capital improvements in the parks — and helping to establish the Parks and Recreation Trust Fund. That dedicated funding source has contributed about \$104 million for capital improvements and land acquisition in the past 10 years.

McKnelly also significantly advanced the efforts of the parks system in the field of environmental education and consistently worked to upgrade training and compensation levels for park staff.

NORTH CAROLINA STATE PARKS MONTHLY ATTENDANCE REPORT 2003

PARK	NOVEMBER 2003	TOTAL YTD NOV. 2003	NOVEMBER 2002	TOTAL YTD NOV. 2002	% CHANGE (2002/2003)	
					NOV.	YTD
Carolina Beach	16,111	242,660	12,980	228,273	24%	6%
Cliffs of the Neuse	6,515	114,217	6,069	133,903	7%	-15%
Crowder's Mountain	22,488	200,997	23,717	275,383	-5%	-27%
Eno River	23,342	265,303	24,535	289,243	-5%	-8%
Occoneechee Mountain	3,073	28,545	3,776	33,498	-19%	-15%
Falls Lake	18,772	654,910	35,874	1,009,355	-48%	-35%
Fort Fisher	27,840	712,391	44,173	977,568	-37%	-27%
Fort Macon	67,290	1,227,378	57,346	1,263,028	17%	-3%
Goose Creek	10,653	116,790	9,371	130,395	14%	-10%
Gorges	4,397	86,026	8,272	152,048	-47%	-43%
Hammocks Beach	6,411	144,003	11,766	182,074	-46%	-21%
Hanging Rock	23,364	355,650	24,694	380,003	-5%	-6%
Jockey's Ridge	35,906	1,014,419	43,179	961,674	-17%	5%
Jones Lake	5,812	114,962	5,068	101,368	15%	13%
Jordan Lake	20,366	731,680	31,207	1,534,147	-35%	-52%
Kerr Lake	58,312	1,225,452	48,260	1,545,148	21%	-21%
Lake James	12,509	240,621	11,887	250,787	5%	-4%
Lake Norman	29,286	360,682	20,220	361,019	45%	0%
Lake Waccamaw	4,212	85,238	4,456	96,196	-5%	-11%
Lumber River	4,708	49,244	7,273	54,443	-35%	-10%
Medoc Mountain	3,780	42,709	5,560	69,839	-32%	-39%
Merchant's Millpond *	3,091	136,231	6,511	87,444	-53%	56%
Morrow Mountain	20,400	251,548	31,160	406,220	-35%	-38%
Mount Jefferson	6,731	94,930	8,123	95,853	-17%	-1%
Mount Mitchell	39,922	670,179	32,512	554,433	23%	21%
New River	8,227	154,053	6,852	150,621	20%	2%
Pettigrew	4,613	80,903	5,149	78,070	-10%	4%
Pilot Mountain	48,106	390,577	36,962	375,538	30%	4%
Raven Rock	11,619	104,163	8,961	107,109	30%	-3%
Singletary Lake	455	21,167	162	15,241	181%	39%
South Mountains	13,966	175,908	13,944	159,769	0%	10%
Stone Mountain	25,677	311,989	25,940	440,029	-1%	-29%
Weymouth Woods	4,039	31,610	2,539	26,933	59%	17%
William B. Umstead	36,824	398,006	33,368	384,781	10%	3%
SYSTEMWIDE TOTAL	628,817	10,835,141	651,866	12,911,433	-4%	-16%

Mission

The mission of the North Carolina Division of Parks & Recreation is:

to protect North Carolina's natural diversity;

to provide and promote outdoor recreation opportunities throughout North Carolina;

and

to exemplify and encourage good stewardship of North Carolina's natural resources

for all citizens and visitors of North Carolina.

SAFETY ZONE

Give Your Back Support It Needs

✓ Always think before you lift. Bend your knees both when picking objects up and when setting them down.

✓ Avoid twisting, bending at the waist and excessive reaching while handling heavy objects.

✓ Ease into physically demanding tasks. Change your posture frequently and don't overdo it.

✓ When standing for long periods, place one foot on a low stool to reduce stress on your back.



The Steward

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